

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT/DECISION RECORD

EA Number: AZ-410-2005-0008

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: Project numbers are included in the project list found in Appendix 1.

Applicant: Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

BLM Office: Safford Field Office

DECISION:

It is my decision to implement the proposed action as described and stipulated in the Environmental Assessment, AZ-410-2005-0008, for the Safford Field Office Erosion Control Proposed Projects for construction and maintenance. Implementing the proposed action will minimize soil erosion and rehabilitate eroded areas to maintain or enhance watershed condition and reduce non-point source pollution that may originate on public lands. The project will also help to restore the eroding flood plains of the San Simon River. The proposed action resolves defined issues, meets the purpose and need for action, and would not affect any critical elements and other resources described within the environmental assessment.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Based upon the Safford Field Office Erosion Control Structures Environmental Assessment, AZ-410-2005-0008, I conclude that this action is in conformance with the approved land use plan, Safford District Resource Management Plan. Implementation of the proposed action will result in no significant impact to the human environment. Therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary.

RATIONALE:

As described in the EA, the proposed action is needed to minimize soil erosion and rehabilitate eroded areas to maintain or enhance watershed condition and reduce non-point source pollution that may originate on public lands. Specific objectives include restoration of the eroding flood plains of the San Simon River. The proposed action serves one of the major objectives of the San Simon Watershed Plan: to keep sediment from being transported to the Gila River and into the San Carlos Reservoir. The San Simon River has been incising since early in the 20th century. In an attempt to stop this incision, slow sediment delivery, and restore the river channel, grade control structures have been installed on the San Simon River and its tributaries. Structures are numerous and include at least 14 major detention dams, several dikes and several earth structures. The BLM would maintain these structures and insure their integrity where possible.

MITIGATION/STIPULATIONS:

NONNATIVE/INVASIVE SPECIES:

1. All equipment and vehicles would be power washed before going to the site to lessen the chance of introducing noxious weeds.
2. All work must be performed with the intention to incur only the minimum amount of disturbance necessary to achieve the objectives in order to decrease the establishment of noxious weeds.
3. Rehabilitation work including seeding, mulching and vertical mulching, matting, water control devices, and other measures would have biologist input to reduce introduction of non-native species.
4. Hay brought to the project site must be certified weed-free.

VRM: Use colored concrete mixes where feasible to blend with the natural surrounding and paint metals a color to blend with the natural surroundings.

WILDLIFE: During maintenance activities, patches of thick/tall vegetation will be avoided when possible.

CULTURAL: The following stipulations are set for protection of cultural resources:

Cultural surveys would be conducted prior to any project work. The results of the surveys would determine whether the project is to be carried out, modified, mitigated, and/or cancelled.

Any archaeological or historical artifacts or remains, or vertebrate fossils discovered during construction, maintenance and use shall be left intact and undisturbed; all work in the area shall stop immediately and the Program Manager for Planning and Monitoring shall be notified immediately. Commencement of operations shall be allowed upon clearance by Program Manager.

An additional cultural and paleontological resource survey may be required in the event that the project location is changed or additional surface disturbing operations are added to the project after the initial survey. Any such survey would have to be completed prior to commencement of operations.

ROADS: Any new roads constructed for projects would be reclaimed if there are not needed after the project is completed. Reclamation may include pushing dirt, debris, and vegetation back over the disturbed area and/or reseeding with an Arizona native plant mix.

/s/ William Brandau

09/13/05

Field Manager

Date